



Princess Margriet Award

PRESS RELEASE

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ECF PRINCESS MARGRIET AWARD TO BE PRESENTED IN BRUSSELS ON 18 MARCH

On Tuesday 18 March, Teatro Valle Occupato, a diverse group of performers, artists, theatre workers and citizens from Rome who reclaimed and transformed Italy's oldest theatre, and the Croatian cultural activist Teodor Celakoski will receive the sixth ECF Princess Margriet Award from the Princess herself. ECF's President, HRH Princess Laurentien, will also be present. BOZAR, the Centre of Fine Arts in Brussels, is the venue for the award ceremony.

The annual Princess Margriet Award is given to European cultural change-makers whose work shows the power of cultural engagement in making social and political change possible. The winners receive a total amount of €50,000. First presented in 2008, the Awards have been won by trailblazing activists, choreographers, theatre and film makers and visual artists.

What connects the laureates of 2014, the year the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) celebrates its 60th anniversary, is the way in which they have seized culture as a space of possibility. A space through which new traditions of 'commoning' – the practice of social cooperation against sweeping privatisation and top-down regulation of public resources – can grow. The award ceremony in Brussels will be preceded by a debate involving Teatro Valle Occupato and Teodor Celakoski, moderated by Maria Hlavajová. This debate will address the role of culture in reclaiming the public sphere and soliciting institutional change. Special guest speakers of the day are Chantal Mouffe, Ugo Mattei and Emina Visnic.



Teatro Valle Occupato saved Italy's oldest theatre from an uncertain future in 2011 by occupying it. Since then, the loose-knit collective of performers, directors, technicians and citizens has transformed the space into one of Europe's most ground-breaking cultural venues. The group, which is in the process of establishing a foundation for the commons, *Fondazione Teatro Valle Bene Comune*, is constructing and defending culture as a common activity. Its collective energy is inspiring similar initiatives all over Europe.



Teodor Celakoski devotes his creative energy to institutional innovation and political activism, guided by a notion of culture as an agent for transformation. Among the many initiatives in which he has been a catalysing force are MaMa, a net culture center in Zagreb, Clubture, a collaborative platform which connects independent cultural organisations in Croatia, and Right to the City, an alliance engaging citizens and communities in reclaiming the public sphere.

Jury member **Chris Dercon**, the director of London's Tate Modern, said about the laureates: "It is precisely the precarious conditions felt by countries hardest hit by the financial crisis that Teodor Celakoski, the collectives he works with and Teatro Valle Occupato are trying to address and overcome."

Note to editors

For more information: <http://www.culturalfoundation.eu/activities/princess-margriet-award>

European Cultural Foundation (ECF)

By collaborating with creative intellectuals and artists from all over the world, ECF has been a staunch supporter of culture in Europe for the past 60 years. The bottom line of this support is that culture engages people and can inspire them to solicit new approaches to established concepts of democracy. The power of culture is an essential component in the creation of an open and inclusive European society. In her capacity as President of the European Cultural Foundation, HRH Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands is an active proponent of the Foundation's mission.

www.culturalfoundation.eu

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